



Reigniting the Cancer Moonshot Initiative

“The experience of cancer — of getting a cancer diagnosis, surviving cancer, losing someone to cancer — has touched virtually every American family.” The White House

What is the Cancer Moonshot Initiative?

In 2022, President Biden announced the relaunch of the federal government’s Cancer Moonshot Initiative. The original Cancer Moonshot Initiative, launched in 2016, continued the almost-100 years of government investment in cancer by focusing on improving scientific discovery, collaboration, and data sharing. The relaunch has even more ambitious goals: Reduce the number of cancer deaths by half and improve cancer care for all Americans within the next 25 years. The national initiative comprises academic institutions, scientists, foundations, non-profit organizations, health systems, leaders from the cancer survivorship and caregiver communities, companies from all industries and sectors, and federal, state, and local government agencies.

Why the Cancer Moonshot Initiative Remains Important

During the COVID-19 pandemic, more than 9 million Americans delayed and missed routine cancer screenings or were not able to schedule new cancer screenings.¹

What steps are being taken to reignite the Cancer Moonshot Initiative?

The White House and The President’s Cancer Panel have outlined a series of steps to reignite the Cancer Moonshot Initiative, including:

- Decreasing persistent cancer-related disparities that cause significant variations in cancer health outcomes from prevention to survivorship and disproportionately affect vulnerable populations.
- Improving cancer treatment through individualized, patient-centered care.
- Increasing patient and community engagement in cancer research to improve access and other important factors associated with cancer outcomes.
- Increasing early and routine cancer screenings, especially among those who missed screenings during the COVID-19 pandemic.

¹ Wang L. Working to close the cancer screening gap caused by COVID. National Cancer Institute. May 17, 2022. Accessed January 11, 2023. <https://www.cancer.gov/news-events/cancer-currents-blog/2022/covid-increasing-cancer-screening>.

² By improving access to cancer screening, diagnostics, and treatments for all people, including those with low incomes, those of all races, ethnicities, genders, and resources, and those who live in rural communities, metropolitan communities, or tribal regions.

History of the Cancer Moonshot Initiative

1937: President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signs the National Cancer Act of 1937, establishing the National Cancer Institute.

1962: President John F. Kennedy gives a speech promising that Americans will push the limits of human achievement and reach the moon.

1960s: Invoking JFK’s ambitious plan to send a man to the moon, cancer activist Mary Lasker calls for “a moonshot for cancer.”

1971: President Richard Nixon signs the National Cancer Act of 1971, starting a “war on cancer.”

2016: President Barack Obama signs the 21st Century Cures Act, funding the original Cancer Moonshot Initiative.

2022: President Joe Biden reignites the Cancer Moonshot Initiative with the ambitious goal of cutting cancer deaths in half over the next 25 years.



The Goals of the national Cancer Moonshot Initiative

With seven goals, the reignited Cancer Moonshot Initiative aims to develop solutions to positively change the trajectory of cancer care, survivorship, and outcomes nationwide.



Diagnose cancer early



Prevent cancer



Increase cancer equity²



Target the right cancer treatments to the right patients



Improve treatments against deadly and rare cancers



Support cancer patients, cancer survivors, and caregivers



Learn from cancer survivors



Examples of Organizations Involved in the Cancer Moonshot Initiative



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
 Consortium of National Networks
 SelfMade Health Network
 (CDC National Disparity Network)
<http://www.selfmadehealth.org/>
[@SelfMadeHealth](#)

What are some promising areas of the Cancer Moonshot Initiative?

The Cancer Moonshot Initiative includes many promising areas.

- **Increased research** will allow a better understanding of the complexities of cancer and how similar cancers affect people differently.
- **Enhanced data sharing** will help revolutionize cancer diagnosis and treatment.
- **Decreasing cancer disparities** will improve cancer care for people who are disproportionately affected by certain cancers due to socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, or geographic location.
- **Increasing prevention and detection** will keep as many people safe from preventable cancers as possible.
- **Increasing support** by expanding patient navigation, increasing the number of community health workers, and improving nurse navigation will change the meaning of a cancer diagnosis and cancer survivorship.

The President's Cancer Panel's Goals to Improve Cancer Equity Through Screening



The President's Cancer Panel, appointed experts who advise the President on improving cancer care for Americans, has released a [guide](#) to improve cancer care and health equity through improved cancer screening. More effective implementation of cancer screening will allow companies, organizations, health systems, and communities to save lives and reduce the burden of cancer.

- Improve and align cancer screening communication.
 - Develop effective communications about cancer screening that reach all populations.
 - Expand and strengthen National Cancer Roundtables that focus on cancer screening.
- Facilitate equitable access to cancer screening.
 - Provide and sustainably fund community outreach and support services to promote appropriate screening and follow-up care.
 - Increase access to self-sampling for cancer screening.
- Strengthen workforce collaborations to support cancer screening and risk assessment.
 - Empower healthcare team members to support screening.
 - Expand access to genetic testing and counseling for cancer risk assessment.
- Create health information technology that promotes appropriate cancer risk assessment and screening.
 - Create computable versions of cancer screening and risk assessment guidelines.
 - Create and deploy effective clinical decision support tools for cancer risk assessment and screening.

The Panel urges all stakeholders to work together to close gaps in cancer screening and ensure that the benefits of cancer screening reach all populations.